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FARM PLANS FOR 1937 IN THE NORTH CENTRAL STATES

A radio talk by Claude Wickard, Director of the North Central Division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour Wednesday, March 31, 1937, at 12:55 p.m. (EST), the National Broadcasting Company and a network of associated radio stations.

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A good many farmers have decided how they are going to take part in the 1937 Agricultural Conservation Program. They know on how much land, if any, they can earn payments for diversion from crops that deplete the soil. They know which fields they are going to plant to alfalfa, which ones to red clover, which to lespedeza, and which they are going to terrace.

For example, one farmer I know says he is going to plant 5 acres more of alfalfa and 15 acres of red clover, and he is going to plant some trees. Those who don't have their plans all made are just about to do so. Time, tide, and the spring work wait for no man.

My point in talking about these plans is this: The Triple-A is asking every farmer in the North Central Region, who is interested in taking part in the program, to put these plans down on paper.

This will not obligate anybody to do anything. But it is very important to the program, and important to the farmer who wants to take full advantage of the program.

I understand that farmers in other parts of the country will put their plans down on paper also, but the method of doing it varies from region to region. I can speak only for the North Central Region. As you know, this region takes in the corn belt and the northern lake states.

The State agricultural conservation committees and others working with the program have made up some forms to make it easy for each farmer to set down his plans. They have also designated a time and place in each community for the farmers to go and fill in these forms. There will be somebody there to help fill them in and to answer questions about the program as it applies to that community. As I said before, filling out this declaration of intention will not obligate anybody. But you can easily see how much better the program will work out if the farmer and the Triple-A work together right from the start. It should do away with the guesswork. And, after all, results in soil conservation are what we want.

Our agricultural colleges and experiment stations and our county agents have been telling us for years that we were going to have to decrease our acres of soil depleting crops such as corn, wheat, and barley, and grow more conserving crops such as alfalfa, red clover, sweet clover, and blue grass. These people pointed out the great loss in fertility and productive power of farm land. They scarcely needed to remind us of the erosion that was taking

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place on our farms. I guess many of us didn't like to think about such alarming things, especially when we knew that it meant less gross income from the sale of our crops and greater expenses for the year if we really tried to conserve our soils. But today every farmer can undertake practices which conserve his soil. Under the 1937 program the Federal Government is promoting the general welfare by rewarding farmers for diverting some of their land from soil depleting crops to soil conserving crops. And it is sharing with them the cost of seeding clovers and grasses, and the expense of applying lime and phosphates to better grow these conserving crops. I know many of you have found that prices of good adapted clover seeds are pretty high, but remember that the rates of payments under the program in our region are \$2.50 per acre for seeding adapted alfalfa, \$2.00 for adapted red clover, and other seedings in proportion. Remember also that, if you do not harvest any soil depleting crops from such land, it is possible to get much larger payments. And even more if you get a good stand. But, you say, "I must have some oat pasture or soybean hay or sudan grass for this year because my last year's seedings of clover or grasses failed during the dry weather." Under the program you can grow these crops in place of conserving crops that failed, without risking the loss of any payment you earn.

In nearly every community of the North Central Region, there will be a meeting in the next two or three weeks to explain the details of the program to the farmers of the community. There you will be able to learn just how this program applies to your own individual farm. There you can find what the rates of payments will be for your farm. If you don't get all the information you need at this meeting you can see your county agent or your county committee, any of these folks will be glad to help you plan your farming operations for 1937 so that you can take full advantage of the program. You accomplish this by filling in the forms I mentioned a minute ago. You can't lose; and you have much to gain if you make your plans now to cooperate in this program to conserve the agricultural resources of the country and promote a more economic use of our farm lands.

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